

Common Thinking Errors

Fantasy Free Economics, James Quillian



Fantasy Free Economics I am compiling a page devoted to common thinking errors that are highly relevant to economics and political science. The list will get long. For now I am just adding them as they come to mind.

- 1.) **Self Importance:** People are important to themselves, family and a few friends. As harmless as this may seem it is the root of many false notions. An individual reasons, “As important as I am, certainly I am worthy of being served by those I help elect to public office.” Of a course, a person is of no importance at all to a politician. To a politician, a voter is a resource. A permanent disconnect is formed where the constituent expects to get representation from a representative who holds office first and foremost out of self interest.
- 2.) **What I see is all there is:** Most of what is relevant is not part of what is apparent from a casual glance.
- 3.) **Government is benevolent:** People are hardwired to treat government as a parent. It is not.
- 4.) **The incentive to serve:** The incentive to serve is assumed to be present in those who are elected to office or work in government. Nature provides only one incentive that is relevant to politics and economics. That is self interest. The incentive to serve is completely imaginary. People in government are motivated to exploit problems for personal gain while appearing to work in the public interest.
- 4.) **The divinity of government:** Human beings are prone to worship. Government is largely worshiped and ascribed powers of a divine nature. It is instinctive for a human being to prostrate himself before a perceived

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divine entity. When a problem is turned over to government for handling, attitudes are that the problem is solved and that government has the power, knowledge and interest to solve any problem with which it is charged.

5.) **Soldiers fight for freedom:** A soldier is a citizen with a job. A soldier does not pick the fights he participates in. Freedom rarely has anything to do with a U.S. military operation.

6.) **Gross Domestic Product is a good indicator of financial well being:** Ten percent of the population owns 80 percent of the nation's assets. Five percent of the population earns around thirty percent of all income. Gross Domestic Product could double and the average person could be worse off.

7.) **Public officials are just like the rest of us:** Public officials have political personalities. Political personality is so similar to a sociopathic personality. The two terms could be used as synonyms.

8.) **A public servant sets aside self interest:** Self interest is a constant in human behavior. Self interest does not disappear if a person takes a certain job. In the private sector self interest is a cause of efficiency. Self interest in the public sector causes inefficiency

9.) **Credentials imply competence:** Credentials actually contribute to incompetence. Credentials allow individuals to profit from the pretense of knowledge.

10.) **Patriotism is good:** Patriotism is actually the all time world wide leading cause of unnecessary deaths.

11.) **People think independently:** Most people go long periods of time without an original thought. The mind records words and images and a person believes those are his thoughts.

12.) **Work is a first choice:** Work is actually only engaged in if there is absolutely no way to live off the efforts of others. Mainstream economics treats all humans as 100% industrious. This is not true at all and it is a main reason why they never get anything right.

13.) **Every person needs a college education:** When the supply of educated people exceeds the demand, a college education can be of no value at all.

14.) **Communication only occurs with words:** Communication without words is actually more precise and meaningful.

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15.) **All children want to learn:** All very young children want to learn. As children pass five or six years of age, the learning desire subsides. By the time children are twelve years old only a small number still learn. The majority of children actually develop an aversion to learning. Instead, their minds begin rejecting new knowledge. This is why so little learning takes place in high school. All students are forced to attend and most of those actually avoid learning.

16.) **As an organ, the brain seeks fairness and justice:** The main concerns of the brain are survival and passing of genes forward into new generations. The brain will cause you and even trick you into doing the things evolution has determined optimize survival and reproduction. Everything your brain causes you to do is not rational in the current time frame. Social evolution and physical evolution do not take place at the same pace. At any one time one is always ahead of the other.